

INVESTIGATING HOTEL EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT IN STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Rana Ozen Kutanis
Sakarya University

Muammer Mesci,
Duzce University

Istemi Comlekci
Duzce University

Oznur Sahin
Duzce University

The aim of this study is to investigating participation levels of hotel employees in the dimensions of strategic human resources management. To achieve this, we present to what extent hotel employees participated in the dimensions of strategic human resources management. The success of hotel business in undertaking the wishes and expectations of its employees will motivate them and will contribute to the managers and companies. The research data was derived from employees working full-time shifts in a five-star hotel. At the end of the research, it's stated that most of the employees participated in the dimensions of strategic human resources management. However, it's determined that most of the employees had a middle level participation according to the statements that produce the dimensions strategic human resources management. As a result, it's deduced that employees in hotels care about the dimensions of strategic human resources management and participate in them. The fact that the data was gathered from only one five-star hotel is an important constraint of this study.

Keywords: *Strategic Human Resources Management, Hotel, Turkey.*

JEL Classification: *L83, M1, O1*



INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, organizations should care about their human resources if they want to survive and gain sustainable competitive advantage over their competitors. Organizations should manage their human resources correctly in order to reach their strategic aims and goals. Strategic human resources involve the accurate preparations related to the strategic plans and goals which the organization has planned.

The coordination between the organizations' business strategies and strategic human resources plays an important role in gaining a sustainable advantage. In recent years, the increasing rate of the studies in strategic human resources management shows the importance of our subject. We can see through the different approaches in the literature that human relations resource dimensions consist of four parts. These dimensions are as follows; transformation engineering, leadership, learning in the workplace and unions.

LITERATURE

Strategic Human Resources Management

Human resources management can be identified as a discipline involving policy making, planning, organizing, orienting and overseeing activities for supporting necessary human resources and making improvements for the purpose of creating competitive advantages in the organization (Yüksel, 2000) Human resources management is the style of personnel management from the human resources perspective. The organizations work on how to improve human relations to advance the human qualifications of the managers and to gain efficiency through this (Canman, 2000).

In recent years, human resources management had a greater importance thanks to its effects on the functions of hotels. Human resources have a great effect on the success of hotels, which motivates its employees, satisfies their expectations and requests, and plays a great role in the success of the organization. (Karagöz 2003; Yıldız and et al., 2009)

Strategy is the process in which a business states its basic targets and visions and puts forth necessary resources in order to reach these targets (Chandler 1962). Strategy according to Mirza and Ülgen (2005) is the sum of dynamic decisions that are made by examining the actions of competitors which are focused on the targets and long termed actions.

Strategy, before anything else, gives us the opportunity to evaluate the environment and predict the future and thus gives the business a chance to self-evaluate. On the other hand, strategy enables the business to head towards a mutual aim within the business, provide consistency, and show the future of business activities, as well as by constituting a mainframe for the plans which increases the quality of the management (Dinçer, 1998:28; Asprogerakas, 2007). Strategic management defines the overall interaction and persistence of the upper class managers, virtues of upper class management, environment and available resources between each other (Bayraktaroğlu, 2008).

In recent years, it can be seen that the growing interest in strategic management encourages the concern regarding the various business functions since its role in this process deals with the integration of strategic human relations with strategic human resources management. The underlying thought in this integration process is that if human resources are a strategic resource, then it should be managed strategically. Strategic human resources management is a process including all activities and decisions about the management of all employees in the business and activities that are exercised in order to create and maintain a competitive advantage (Seviçin, 2006).

Even though there are a number of definitions used, shortly, strategic human resources management can be defined as “the changes happening in the inner and outer circles of organizations influencing human resources strategies of organizations” (Bayraktaroğlu, 2008). In other words, it can be defined as the process which, in order to realize aims and mission of an organization, details consistent and long-term planning, management and control of human resources in a way to get the most additional value (Demir, 2009).

In a sense, strategic human resources are another aspect of strategic planning within human resources (Wang, 2006). In strategic human resources planning, the aim is to maintain the management considering the difference of workforce which has gradually become multinational, as well as to constitute a structure in which an organization's employees, customers and suppliers are contained in the business process, and fast communication is provided for intensive sharing of information. The human resources planning of a business needs to be human oriented and consistent with strategic plans of the organization. The lack of strategic planning causes aims to be blurred, which ultimately affects personnel planning, technology and other operational factors negatively (Özsöz, 2006).

The Dimensions of Strategic Human Resources Management

Strategic human resources management is divided into four subjects. These are transformation engineering, leadership, workplace learning, and unions. These four dimensions will be further examined in the following pages.

Transformation Engineering

In general, transformation is defined as bringing something from one level to another level. Transformations shouldn't be perceived only as precautions presented in the cases of negative situations. As a matter of fact, in another definition, transformation is defined as a process or a setting changed from one condition to another condition in a planned or unplanned way (Taşlıyan and Karayılan, 2006,254). Transformation management is a process of planning adopting and deliberately guiding the transformations occurring in workplaces. The aim of transformation engineering is to improve the performance of an organization with an active business strategy and afterwards provide continual development. Transformation engineering is an approach that focuses on re-projection of the process while discarding outdated process methods. Strategic human resources management attempts to realize radical transformations. It tries to create a plain structure of organization unrelated to hierarchical organizations. To achieve these aims, it supports radical changes in upper class managements and gives way to build up self-managing teams. As part of strategic human resources management, when we want to itemize the approach of transformation engineering it will be as follows; (Bayraktaroğlu, 2008)

- a. An open communication between upper, lower and mid classes, re-projection of the businesses and building up self-managing teams
- b. Information technology: the ability to do tasks in more radical and different possible ways
- c. Sustainability of the support of devoted upper-class management.

Leadership

In order to discuss leadership, most importantly, there needs to be a group of people, and they need a mutual aim and a leader to help realize this aim. Moreover, this leader should have the necessary information, skills and personal qualifications to persuade the group to make efforts

rather than forcing them to. (Bolat and Seymen, 2003). Caring for human resources, appreciation of entrepreneurial spirit and creativity, and being open to innovations becomes possible with the leadership of active managers. (Perinçek and et al., 2008). For installment of these features, all personnel, including the managers, must be given training. According to this concept, an important criterion is that there should be proper leadership regarding the quality of the training given to the participants (Develioğlu and et al., 2006). In the human resources management approach, a human resources manager is bound to the administrative body, whereas in strategic human resources management (Chheang, 2009), the manager only has a say in the decisions made in the administrative body. A leader's role in strategic human resources management is as follows; to develop a strong organizational culture, to provide the cooperation and participation of the employees and to provide innovation and transformation. There's a critical importance of the leader in the process of transformational engineering. A transformational leader empowers his/her employees and helps guide the organization away from a hierarchical structure. In the context of the strategic human resources management, the leadership approach can be itemized as follows (Bayraktaroğlu, 2008);

- A leader values the fulfillment of the organizational activities in an effective and productive way
- A leader helps to create a strong organizational culture
- A leader contributes to paying for the high rate of devotion of the employees
- A leader contributes to creating cooperation among employees
- A leader helps to motivate and encourage the employees.

Learning in the workplace

This notion can be explained as a process through which individuals constantly improve their capacities to achieve the results they want to reach, develop new and broader thinking methods and also a process in which the collective consciousness is freed, and individuals constantly continue to learn methods of how to learn together (Çakıcı, 2006). Organizational learning is an organizational process that makes it possible to present new information, to use the newly developed information in the production of recent goods and service production, to turn all the experience gained into an opportunity of learning and promotes presenting the new information (Koçel, 2005). In order for organizations to survive and get better, proper means must be readied for the self-

improvement of the personnel and their skills. Workplace learning means the application of managerial information and theory in the workplace. Individually or in a group, constant learning for the business must be the basic process. In this way, skills are empowered and a competitive advantage will be gained (Bayraktaroğlu, 2008). In order for the organization to gain a continual competitive advantage, an interior and exterior analysis of the organization must be conducted and assessed. In this context, workplace learning contributes a great deal to informing the organization on past activities. Certain changes need to be made concerning the conditions the organization is in, the changes in the market and the competition among the organizations. In this case, the organization has to make good use of transformation opportunities by using alternative ways. In the context of strategic human resources management workplace learning can be itemized as follows (Bayraktaroğlu, 2008);

- Necessary efforts must be made to reach the business' goals
- Employees must be given the chance to improve different ideas
- Education seminars must be organized for organizational learning
- Individual learning must be encouraged.
- Team learning must be given importance.

Unions

Occurrence of tolerance, a decentralized unified market structure and transfer of power to the employers cause unions to become passive in the labor market. (Turner and et al.,, 2009) However, new sources of power are formed. Despite the support for participation concerning new production systems, this condition is fragile and it has gone away from voluntary participation of employees. Unions can compensate for their weakening sources of power by being effective in employees' participation and withdrawal. Union's rates and concept of its self-determination against the business is of importance. In the past, daily problems and complaints were the mainstream of union life. However, these days there's much less of this that occurs. It seems that it's been regarded a top priority issue that employers and employees have face to face communication without the involvement of the unions (Wehebe and Kader, 2007; Öcal, 2010). In the organization, if the management and employees share the same aims, and if the employee is committed to his/her work, they will start to believe what is good for the management can also be good for them. Strategic human resources management

applications are giving the employees a sense of job security and these applications will cross out conflicts by getting ahead of the union's idea of individual contracts and job relations, and human relations idea of getting high performance from the employees. In the concept of strategic human resources management, the union approach can be itemized as follows; (Bayraktaroğlu,2008);

- Opportunities must be created for unification of all employees under a specific aim.
- Every employee must have health insurance.
- Upper management must make it possible for the employees to make use of the rights they possess.
- There should be a contract signed between the employee and the employer.

METHOD

The aim of this study is to determine participation levels of the employees working in hotel businesses in the dimensions of strategic human resources management. The data obtained with this study provides important information for business managers by putting forth to which extent the employees working in hotel businesses participate in the dimensions of strategic human resources management. Managers are able to see defective the factors that can arise from these dimensions and by making changes accordingly, can provide an important resource in the sense of business efficiency and productivity.

The study relies on a quantitative research method. In this method, the most common way of data gathering is the survey technique. So, in this study data is gathered via survey technique. Moreover, the survey technique is chosen because it is the most convenient way for attitude scaling, it presents statistical data and it facilitates easiness not only for the person being surveyed but also the researcher (Usal and Kuşluvan, 1998). In order to provide content validity, local and foreign resources on the dimensions of strategic human resources management have been researched. In this context, based on the study of Bayraktaroğlu (2008) an attitude scale has been constituted which evaluates the features of dimensions of strategic human resources management. A scheme of the survey form has been observed by academicians specialized on the subject and after that, necessary editing has been done on the form. Before performing the survey, a pre-implementation of the survey was carried out, taking the suggestions of the researchers into account, the survey was given its final form and implementation of the survey begun.

The survey form used in the study consists of two sections. In the first part, there's an attitude scale comprised of 18 statements for determining the participants' dimensions of strategic human resources management. There is also a fivefold Likert scale (5: I totally agree, 4=I agree very much, 3= I agree to a middle extent, 2=I agree a little, 1=I don't agree at all) which enables the employees to evaluate the statements. In the second section, there are questions regarding the demographic features of the participants.

The pre-implementation of the survey was applied to 20 employees working in a 5 star hotel business in Bursa between July 1st, 2010 and July 15th, 2010. The reason why this hotel was chosen is because it's a hotel that is open year-round. In the pre-implementation phase, the reliability of the survey forms were measured and the Cronbach alpha value was calculated as 0,88. As a result of the test, the general Cronbach alpha of the data has rated over 0,7 level as Nunnally (1967) stated earlier. This means that as a general evaluation of survey form, its reliability is high and internal adaptation is tolerable. After the pre-implementation process, research studies started.

The study was gathered in the months of July and August. The focus of the study was a five star hotel business operating in Bursa year-round with 200 full-time employees. The study was conducted in Bursa as it was convenient in terms of time, financial costs and geographical proximity and transportation utilities. As the study focus is in accessible substantiality, no other sampling method is determined. Survey forms were given out to be filled in by employees and then these forms were collected by hand. Within the study, some of the employees didn't want to join the study as they weren't available during the specified months. As a result, a hundred of the survey forms were received back and this quantity constituted 50% of the study focus.

In the analysis of the data obtained, SPSS 16.0 (statistic program for social sciences) statistic program is used. In this sense, frequency and percentage values are calculated to determine the data concerning the demographic features and the participation level of the statements of the employees in the attitude scale. Also in the study, a confirmatory factor analysis was carried out to determine the dimensions of strategic human resources management.

FINDINGS

Particularly; the data of employees concerning demographic questions is evaluated using frequency and percent age analysis. The

evidence concerning this evaluation is presented in Chart 1 as a whole. When Chart 1 is examined it can be seen that 88% of the employees are male and 12% are female.

As to education status, 6 employees (6%) have an elementary education, 18 employees (18%) have a secondary education, 59 employees (59%) have a high school education, 8 employees (8%) have a vocational education and 9 employees (9%) have a university education. When we analyze the ages of the employees' we'll see that 16 employees (16%) are in the range of 18-24 years old, 50 employees (50%) are between 25-34 years old, 30 employees (30%) are between 35-44 years old, 2 employees (2%) are between 45-54 years old, and finally, 2 employees (2%) are in the range of 55-64 years old.

Table 1 Demographic Findings of the Research Participants (s=100)

	Demographic features	F	%
Gender	Female	12	12
	Male	88	88
	Total	100	100
Age	18-24	16	16
	25-34	50	50
	35-44	30	30
	45-54	2	2
	55-64	2	2
	Total	100	100
Education Status	Elementary Education	6	6
	Secondary Education	18	18
	High School	59	59
	Vocational	8	8
	University	9	9
	Total	100	100
Positions of Employees	Upper Class	1	1
	Middle Class	13	13
	Lower Class	86	86
	Total	100	100

Working Years	Less than 1 year	21	21
	1–3 year	69	69
	4–7 year	10	10
	Total	100	100
Employment Departments	Front Office	9	9
	Food & Beverage	55	55
	Accounting	5	5
	Technical Services	8	8
	House Keeping	22	22
	Sales & Marketing	1	1
	Total	100	100
Wages of the Employees	576–1000	68	68
	1001–1500	27	27
	1501–2000	2	2
	2001–2500	2	2
	2501 and over	1	1
	Total	100	100

As to positions of employees; 1 employee (1%) is in the upper class, 13 employees (13%) are in the middle class, and 86 employees (86%) are in the lower class. Regarding the departments of the employees surveyed we'll see that 9 employees (9%) are in the front office, 55 employees (55%) are in the food & beverage department, 5 employees (5%) are in accounting, 8 employees (8%) are in technical service, 1 employee (1%) is in sales & marketing, and 22 employees (22%) are in the housekeeping department. As to the years worked by employees analyzed; 21 employees (21%) have worked less than one year, 69 employees (69%) have worked between 1-3 years, 10 employees (10%) have worked between 4-7 years. Finally as to the wages of the employees; 68 employees (68%) earn between 576-1000 TLs, 27 employees (27%) earn between 1001-1500 TLs, 2 employees (2%) earn between 1501-2000 TLs, 2 employees (2%) earn between 2001-2500 TLs and 2 employees (1%) earn 2501 TLs or over.

Factor analyses have been carried out to determine the reliability and to constitute factors and research variables. In the sense of factor analysis; the Barlett test result is 765,432 and with p 0,0000 level Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) sample value is 0,823.

Table 2 Results of Factor Analysis

Factors	Faktör Yükü	Özdeğer	Ortalama	Varyans (%)	Alfa
Transformation Engineering In your business, businesses should be redesigned, self-managing teams should be set up. In your business, information technology should make the businesses in a more radical way and in various styles. In your business, education seminars must be organized for organizational learning. In your business, there's open communication between upper, lower and middle classes.	,750 ,728 ,727 ,485	6,272	3,64	34,843	,771
Leadership In your business, the leader fulfils organizational activities effectively and In your business, the leader contributes to cooperation between employees In your business, the leader helps to create a strong organizational culture In your business, upper management provides support continuously and in a self-sacrificing manner In your business ,the leader contributes to compensate for the high rate of devotion of employees In your business, the leader helps to motivate and encourage the employees	,819 ,799 ,781 ,764 ,747 ,583	2,012	3,61	11,175	,852
Workplace Learning In your business, the team learning must be given importance. In your business, individual learning must be encouraged. In your business, opportunities must be created for unification of all employees under a specific aim. In your business, the employees must be given the chance to improve different ideas. In your business necessary efforts are being made to achieve its business goals	,762 ,759 ,667 ,657 ,585	1,632	3,61	9,068	,678
Social Responsibility In your business, every employee must have a health insurance. In your business, there should be a contract signed between the employee and the employer. In your business, the upper management must make it possible for employees to make use of the rights they possess.	,853 ,823 ,504	1,147	4,18	6,371	,413

In factor analysis, a relation of high correlation is looked for between variables. The more the correlation between variables decreases, the more the trustworthiness of the results of factor analysis decreases. As $p=0,0000 > 0,05$ the result of Barlett test is significant.

Thus, zero hypotheses are rejected and an alternative hypothesis is accepted. In other words; there is a high correlation between variables and it means the data has been derived from multi normal distribution. In the principal component analysis applied to the data, the varimax option is used and the data which has a self-value over 1 according to the obtained screen plot distribution, has been evaluated. There are four factors whose self-values are over 1. These four factors that occurred as a result of factor analysis are defined below. (Chart 2)

- a. Transformation engineering (factor 1)
- b. Leadership (factor 2)
- c. Workplace learning (factor 3)
- d. Social responsibility (factor 4)

The data that has been obtained from the attitude scale of employees which constitutes the second section of the survey form are summarized in Chart 3. Participation levels of the employees concerning the statements are shown in the chart in frequencies and percent-ages.

The answers of the employees concerning participation levels to the statements concerning the dimensions of strategic human resources management have been given in Chart 3. Thus, for the statement, which includes ***the dimension of transformation engineering***; “In your business, there’s an open communication between upper, lower, and middle class.” 49% is “high participation” and “full participation”. Low participation is at the 5% level. For the statements “In your business, businesses should be redesigned, self-managing teams should be set up.” 68% of participants are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 2% of them are at “no participation”. For the statements “In your business, information technology should make the businesses in a more radical way and in various styles.” 59% of participants are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 1% is at “no participation”.

For the statement, which includes ***the dimension of leadership***; “In your business, the leader fulfils organizational activities effectively and productively” 57% are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 2% are at “no participation”. For the statements “In your business, the leader helps to constitute a strong organizational culture” 62% of participants are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 1% is at “no participation”. For the statement “In your business, the leader

contributes to compensate for the high rate of devotion of employees” 53% of participants are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 1% of them is at “no participation”. For the statement “In your business, the leader contributes to a cooperation between employees” 57% of participants are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 1% of them is at “no participation”. For the statement “In your business, the leader helps to motivate and encourage the employees” 52% of participants are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 3% are at “no participation”. For the statement “In your business necessary efforts are being made to achieve the business goals” 63% of participants are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 1% is at “no participation”.

Table 3 Participation Levels Concerning the Dimensions of Strategic Human Resources Management

Dimensions of SHRM		Strongly agree		Much Agree		Medium Agree		Less agree		Strongly Disagree	
Transformation Engineering		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	In your business, there's an open communication between upper, lower and middle class.	21	21	28	28	46	46	5	5	-	-
2	In your business, businesses should be redesigned, self-managing teams should be set up.	15	15	53	53	32	32	2	2	2	2
3	In your business, information technology should make the businesses in a more radical way and in various styles.	19	19	40	40	32	32	7	7	2	2
4	In your business, upper management provides supports continuously and in a self-sacrificing manner	12	12	47	47	31	31	9	9	1	1
Leadership											
1	In your business, the leader fulfils organizational activities effectively and productively	19	19	38	38	35	35	6	6	2	2
2	In your business, the leader helps to constitute a strong organizational culture	16	16	46	46	27	27	10	10	1	1

3	In your business ,the leader contributes to compensate for the high rate of devotion of employees	14	14	39	39	38	38	8	8	1	1
4	In your business, the leader contributes to- cooperation between employees	14	14	43	43	35	35	7	7	1	1
5	In your business, the leader helps to motivate and encourage the employees	16	16	36	36	38	38	7	7	3	3
6	In your business necessary efforts are being made to achieve business goals	17	17	46	46	30	30	6	6	1	1
Workplace Learning											
1	In your business, the employees must be given the chance to improve different ideas.	13	13	35	35	38	38	13	13	1	1
2	In your business, education seminars must be organized for organizational learning.	16	16	42	42	31	31	8	8	3	3
3	In your business, individual learning must be encouraged.	14	14	40	40	37	37	8	8	1	1
4	In your business, -team learning must be given importance.	17	17	37	37	38	38	8	8	-	-
5	In your business, opportunities must be created for unification of all employees under a specific aim.	23	23	34	34	30	30	12	12	1	1
Social Responsibility											
1	In your business, every employee must have health insurance.	57	57	31	31	10	10	1	1	1	1
2	In your business, the upper management must make it possible for employees to make use of the rights they possess.	22	22	29	29	37	37	10	10	2	2
3	In your business, there should be a contract signed between the employee and the employer.	66	66	25	25	7	7	1	1	1	1

For the statement, which includes *the dimension of workplace learning* “In your business, the employees must be given the chance to improve different ideas.” 48% are at “high participation” and “full

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participation” and 1% is at “no participation”. For the statement “In your business, education seminars must be organized for organizational learning.” 58% of participants are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 3% are at “no participation”. For the statement “In your business, individual learning must be encouraged.” 54% of participants are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 1% is at “no participation”. For the statement “In your business, the team learning must be given importance.” 54% of participants are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 0% are at “no participation”. For the statement “In your business, opportunities must be created for unification of all employees under a specific aim.” 57% of participants are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 1% is at “no participation”.

For the statement, which includes *the dimension of unions* “In your business, every employee must have health insurance” 88% are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 1% is at “no participation”. For the statement “In your business, the upper management must make it possible for employees to make use of the rights they possess.” 49% of participants are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 2% are at “no participation”. For the statement “In your business, there should be a contract signed between the employee and the employer.” 91% of participants are at “high participation” and “full participation” and 1% is at “no participation”.

CONCLUSION

Another subject businesses put emphasis on in the matter of getting higher ground in competition is to improve their existing human relations. In this sense, businesses need to put more emphasis on education and career management applications. Thus, by internal promotion of both upper and lower class managers they don't lose their personnel to other rival businesses. In order to provide the continuity of backup systems in businesses, human resources managers should always care about reorganizing their other functions-recruiting and positioning, wage management, performance evaluation- according to the conditions of the present time. In the strategies businesses perform to be more competitive, human resources managers securing positions in upper management has become an important component (Ylasov, 2006; Harness, 2009).

One of the most important features of strategic human resources management is its ability to make the connections between human relations applications and strategies and the general strategic aims of the

business effectively. In these applications as a necessity of this perception; human resources departments and managers must have less executive, but more strategic missions and the business needs to constitute a vision for contributing to the function of human resources (Bayraktaroğlu, 2008).

In the study, factor analysis was performed. As a result of the factor analysis, four factors occurred whose self-values are over 1. These factors are; *Transformation engineering, leadership, workplace learning and social responsibility*. As a result of the study, it can be determined that a majority of the employees participate in the dimensions of strategic human resources management. However, it is stated that most of the employees had a high rate of middle level participation regarding the statements constituting the dimensions of strategic human resources management. Finally, it is deduced that the employees working in hotel businesses give importance to the dimensions of strategic human resources management and participate in them.

To achieve long term success, businesses must act swiftly and reasonably, take notice of all components affecting the business directly or indirectly, make long-term strategic plans and execute these plans in an effective way. In order for these plans to be made and executed; businesses have to value human resources, which is the most important source of power for businesses, and strategic planning concerning this power have to be made. Furthermore, fundamental dimensions constituting strategic human resources management should be approached within the strategic planning and these dimensions should be considered when making strategic decisions.

The fact that the data was gathered from only one five-star hotel is an important constraint of this study. For researchers, it can be suggested that future studies consider other businesses in different regions and different classes, broader studies containing a bigger number of businesses and employees. However, it can prove useful for the researchers to conduct research on other businesses in different regions and different classes and compare the evidence found.

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REFEREED ANONYMOUSLY

Rana Ozen Kutanis (rkutanis@sakarya.edu.tr) is an Associate Professor at Sakarya University, Faculty of Business and Administrative Sciences, 54187 Sakarya/Turkey.

Muammer Mesci (muammermesci@duzce.edu.tr) is a Research Assistant Doctor at Duzce University, Department of Tourism and Hotel Management, 81650 Akçakoca- Duzce/Turkey.

İstemi Çömlekci (istemicömlekci@duzce.edu.tr) is a Research Assistant at Duzce University, Department of Tourism and Hotel Management, 81650 Akçakoca- Duzce/Turkey.

Öznur Şahin (öznürsahin@duzce.edu.tr) is a graduate student at Duzce University, Social Sciences Institute, Duzce/Turkey.